

STARNET's EBSIN Explores the Environmental and Biological Sciences

The NATO Science, Research, and Technology Network (STARNET) became operational in October 2003 (see *Access*, summer 2003). The Information Management Committee (IMC) of the NATO Research and Technology Agency developed STARNET. The National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII) <www.nbii.gov> played a key role in STARNET's development

through its leadership within the IMC and by contributing its technical and thematic expertise. The NBII is a Web-based system that provides access to biological data and information on the nation's biological resources. Through the NBII, information from government agencies, universities, natural history museums, and many others is made available to NBII users, who include

resource managers at public agencies, scientists in the public and private sectors, educators at all levels, and the general public.

STARNET is composed of seven scientific areas designated as thematic nodes:

- Aerospace Research,
- Defense Against Terrorism,
- Environmental and Biological Sciences,
- Information Sciences,
- Land-based Operations,
- Naval/Marine/Sea Operations, and
- Research Planning.

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GAP Portal Brings GAP Data Online

The Gap Analysis Program (GAP) – an important NBII component – is in an exciting period of change. After a year of design and development work, GAP has a new look, a new URL, a new data distribution and mapping

component, and full Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) Web Mapping Service (WMS) interoperability.

The new URL gives you access to the GAP Portal: <<http://gapanalysis.nbii.gov>>.

Current data needs mandated these important changes. With 36 state projects complete, and more to be finished in the next year, GAP is tackling the challenge of effectively serving and reusing data products

for its customers. The sheer volume of data generated over many years has demanded better discovery and visualization tools to allow resource managers, scientists, and other interested parties a way to find and

view GAP data.

The new look simplifies the previous Web site by organizing content based on the most frequently used content. The new menu has been organized into five major areas to

reflect a new approach to providing information on GAP and access to the GAP data holdings.

The primary goal of the GAP

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The primary goal of the GAP Portal is simple: to serve as a data warehouse where users can search for and visualize GAP data.

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Introducing the NBII-OBIS U.S. Marine Pilot

The NBII (Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Node [FAR], Pacific Basin Information Node [PBIN], and the USGS Florida Integrated Science Center) has teamed up with the U.S. National Ocean Biogeographic Information System (OBIS) Committee to develop a pilot project for marine information, which will be available both through OBIS and the NBII. This would represent the United States as the U.S. Regional OBIS Node (RON) of the international OBIS. The U.S. RON joins others representing New Zealand, Australia, China, Japan, Europe, and Canada. The pilot will serve as a demonstration of feasibility and help to attain support for a permanent U.S. RON.

The Census of Marine Life (CoML) is attempting to determine what lived in the ocean, what lives in the ocean, and what will live in the ocean. OBIS has been created to manage and make available existing information relevant to the CoML, as well as to manage the data created by the CoML. The overall goal for OBIS is to be the authoritative source



Maroon Clownfish (*Amphiprion tricinctus*)



Green Sea Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*)

Photo credits: Clownfish – James E. Maragos; Sea Turtle – Angela K. Kepler / Pacific Biodiversity Information Forum (PBIIF)

of data on the distribution of marine species of the world and to provide that data online with quality control. OBIS links biological survey data with environmental data, maps, and model outputs in a single location to enable the explanation of species distribution and abundance. This international OBIS activity is being implemented through global and regional efforts. The U. S. National OBIS Committee (USNC) has decided to implement a U.S. RON.

Recognizing that the NBII and OBIS are complementary and share a common goal to make high-quality U.S. marine biodiversity data available, the USNC and the NBII have agreed

to collaborate on the creation of a U.S. OBIS joint effort to address the goals of both organizations. This collaboration would utilize existing U.S. marine information system efforts in the NBII and similar ongoing activities within U.S. OBIS to capture relevant U.S. data and to integrate these “national data” with global efforts.

The approach will involve a multi-step process, with the initial focus on establishing ties to the international OBIS and bringing together priority data sets identified by the USNC. To date, the U.S. RON has been established and linked through the OBIS Portal. This includes programmatic and organizational information within the appropriate pages in the OBIS Portal. A Plone Portal has been created with links to and the ability to retrieve U.S. data already contained in OBIS. A DiGIR site has also been installed. These steps complete the initial development phase. Plans are underway to integrate additional U.S. data and establish operating procedures between the U.S. RON and international OBIS.

The three priority data sets to be added to the site include the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum Pacific fish records and marine invertebrate data; data on fisheries from the Gulf of Maine; and marine data currently being collected in Alaska. Additional U.S. data will be added as time and resources allow, in collaboration with the USNC and the NBII.

Access

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Be sure to check out Access on the Web at <http://www.nbio.gov/about/pubs/news>.

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Visit the NBII Home Page at <http://www.nbio.gov>.

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Specific topics have been assigned to each node with its own inventory of selected Web-available information resources based on the relevancy to the topics. The Environmental and Biological Sciences Information Node (EBSIN) should be of particular interest to NBII patrons. The following topics have been assigned to the EBSIN:

The Environmental and Biological Sciences Information Node (EBSIN) should be of particular interest to NBII patrons.

- Agricultural and Food Sciences – the science, art, or practice of cultivating the soil, producing crops, and raising livestock, and, in varying degrees, the preparation and marketing of the resulting products.
- Biological Warfare – warfare involving the use of living organisms (as disease germs) or their toxic products as weapons.
- Ecosystems and Landscapes – the complex of a community of organisms and its environment functioning as an ecological unit.
- Environmental Change – related to monitoring or measuring global changes of the Earth.
- Environmental Hazards – elements with potential to cause damage to the environment or ecosystems.
- General Biology – dealing with the plant and animal life of a region or environment.
- Land Management – official policies and practices for designating, using, or controlling land use while maintaining natural resources in the long term.
- Military and Environment – relating to affects of military operations on ecosystems, managed land, and species.
- Nature Conservation – planned management of a natural resource to prevent exploitation, destruction, or neglect.
- Oceanography – the study of the

oceans, with particular reference to their overall forms, the nature of the sea floor and its sediments (Marine Geology), and the structure and dynamics of the ocean waters. Also includes oceanographic surveys.

- Parks, Zoos, and Wildlife – relating to preserved collections of animals and ecosystems.
- Other – general topics on environmental or biological sciences.

Navigating STARNET

Clicking on the URL <<http://starnet.rta.nato.int/>> provides access to the STARNET Home Page, which briefly outlines the purpose of STARNET. Buttons on the left navigation bar of the home page provide access to each of the nodes. Clicking on the desired node brings you the node home page.

On the node home page, buttons give you access Home, News and Events, Node Search, Contact Us, Nominate Resource, and Manager Login.

Clicking on the Node Search Button brings you to the Search Page that contains options for launching a search within the node. There are a number of options a user can employ to launch his/her search.

One option is to search all data sources in the node, without any refinements. The second option is to refine the search by drop-down menus, which include narrowing the search by the following search options:

- Country: the country to which the information pertains,
- Organization: the type of organization providing the information or resource,
- Language: the language in which the resource is presented, and


- Topics: the topic(s) to which the information in the resource pertains.

Multiple choices can be made in each of these options.

Clicking on NEWS AND EVENTS provides summaries of meetings, conferences, and symposia of interest to EBSIN users.

Clicking on NOMINATE RESOURCE presents a resource nomination page. Users are strongly urged to nominate resources for not only EBSIN, but for other nodes as appropriate. When nominating a resource, fill in as many of the elements as possible, and click the submit button.

The nomination form will then be sent to a content manager for review and evaluation. The content manager will fill in any missing metadata elements, ensure the abstract is complete and meaningful, and then forward the form for inclusion in the STARNET inventory.

Currently, there are 232 Web resources pertaining to the EBSIN topics. Please visit the STARNET, browse through the nodes, and offer feedback. You are also encouraged to nominate resources to the STARNET. It is only through the support of users like you that the STARNET will become a truly comprehensive source of information. 

STARNET is composed of seven scientific areas designated as thematic nodes.

Meet You in Music City!

The annual meeting of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies will be held in Nashville, TN, from September 11-17. Feel free to stop by the NBII exhibit and say hello!

New York Biodiversity Research and Conservation Database Debuts

In the summer 2004 issue of *Access*, readers learned about the recent inauguration of the NBII Northeast Information Node (NIN) <<http://nin.nbii.gov>>. With a focus on the states of New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine, NIN extends and complements the existing NBII regional nodes.

As originally envisioned, NIN is addressing the effects of growth on the nation's urban and suburban regions as an area of special concern. In keeping with this emphasis, a new product – the New York Area Biodiversity Research and Conservation Database (NYBD) tool and mapper – is now available via the NIN Home Page.

This online database and mapping tool provides detailed information on conservation and biodiversity research projects occurring in the New York City metropolitan area. The database will serve as the first step toward understanding the scope of biodiversity research and conservation efforts in the region. It will also foster public awareness of the health of the local natural environment, and ultimately help influence environmentally relevant policy decisions that affect the well-being of New York's residents.

Projects listed in the NYBD range from activities carried out by scientific, policy, and advocacy organizations, to efforts conducted by universities and governmental agencies, and departments at all levels. This product provides quick access to project contacts, citations, methodology, and data sources. The goal is to let users easily discover “who is doing what” in the field of biodiversity and conservation research in the greater New York area.

Access readers are invited to visit the site and browse records; search for projects based on project type

New York Area Biodiversity Research and Conservation Database

HOME | ACKNOWLEDGMENTS | BROWSE ALL PROJECTS | SEARCH PROJECTS | LOGIN

Search within all Projects
Any/all criteria you enter or select will be included in your query.

Submit Search | Reset Search

Search for Text (in project's title, abstract, goals or objectives):

PI's or other Individuals associated with Project: 0

Organization: 0

Field Of Application: 0

Date range: Between and (use date format mm/dd/yyyy)

Enter spatial coordinates in the boxes below or use the map: Click once inside the map to set one corner of bounding box you want to define, then move your mouse to where you want to set the other corner and click again.

Xmin: Ymin: Xmax: Ymax:

Submit Search | Reset Search

PLEASE NOTE: the coordinates here show two decimal places, but the accuracy of your mouse position on the map probably doesn't achieve that level of precision. If you have numeric coordinates for the area you wish to search, you can enter the numbers directly in the form fields (up to 6 decimal places) for a better match.

Reset Map

CIESIN and CERC are centers within The Earth Institute at Columbia University. Copyright©1997-2005. The Trustees of Columbia University in the City of New York.

USGS

To search projects spatially, just enter the coordinates in the boxes or use the map. Click once inside the map to set one corner of the bounding box you want to define, then move your mouse to where you want to set the other corner and click again.

(for example, query the database to find all projects studying Great Blue Herons); search projects by geographic location, such as county, watershed, and coordinates (for instance, query the database to find all projects dealing with Jamaica Bay); create a map illustrating the results of your queries; use the mapping tool to query projects by location; and add research projects to the database.

As with nearly all NBII products, the NYBD tool and mapper is a collaborative effort. The vision for the database tool originated at the Center for Environmental Research and Conservation (CERC), at Columbia University <www.cerc.columbia.edu>. CERC established the system's functional requirements and brought financial support to the tool's development, supplementing the funding provided by NIN and USGS. CERC is helping expand the number of records and delivering updated land use/land cover GIS data layers.

The Center for International Earth Science Information Network, a NIN principal, designed and created the interactive site, online database, and mapping tool, and hosts the service. The NYDB's other major collaborator is Nurture New York's Nature, a not-for-profit foundation dedicated to increasing public awareness of the importance of New York's nature to the health and well-being of the city's inhabitants.

NBII Node Manager Marcia McNiff views the new database tool and mapper as a model for future node efforts. “We see the underlying architecture of this tool being used as a template to construct similar online data catalogs for other initiatives in the northeast,” she says. “We’re very excited about the prospects.”

For more information about the NYBD, contact NIN Principal Investigator Mark Becker at <mbecker@ciesin.columbia.edu>.

Invasive Species Toolbox

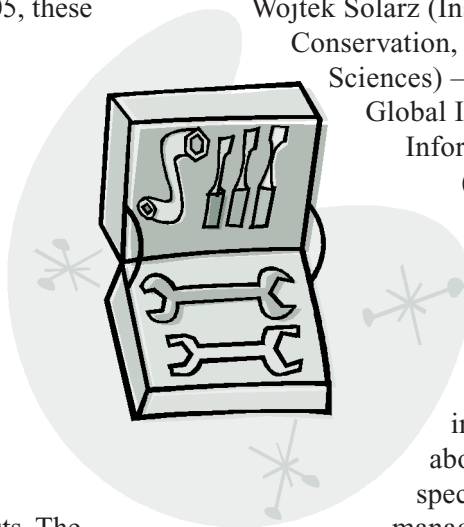
This column is a collection of useful items and highlights related to invasive species information management issues. Do you have ideas or suggestions? Contact <asimpson@usgs.gov> or <esellers@usgs.gov> and cc: the Access editor <ron_sepic@usgs.gov>.

NOBANIS Invasive Species List Portal to Launch This Fall

The Nordic-Baltic Network on Invasive Species (NOBANIS) <<http://www.sns.dk/nobanis/default.htm>> is a gateway to data on invasive species in the regions of Northern Europe and the Atlantic, including Denmark, Estonia, the Faroe Islands, Finland, Germany, Greenland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, and Sweden.

NOBANIS is developing a distributed, integrated network of regional invasive species databases and promoting information exchange among the eleven member nations.

Each NOBANIS nation is working to develop national lists of non-native species from terrestrial, marine, and freshwater environments. To be completed by fall 2005, these lists will be used to identify current and potentially invasive species for management and control. The Agricultural Department at the University of Upsalla, Sweden, is developing a NOBANIS portal that will give access to information from all of these species lists. The NOBANIS Portal will be launched in late fall 2005. Future products of the NOBANIS project include a database of standardized fact sheets on the “worst aliens” (40-60 species) for the region, which is slated to be finished in 2006.



Three members of the NOBANIS Steering Committee – Hans Svart (Project Manager), Inger Weidema (Project Secretary), and Wojtek Solarz (Institute of Nature Conservation, Polish Academy of Sciences) – attended the 2004 Global Invasive Species Information Network (GISIN) meeting in Baltimore, MD. Their attendance at the GISIN meeting provided them with essential information about invasive species information management and technology, which was instrumental in making important decisions on the data types, structure, function, and interoperability of the national databases. NOBANIS also uses the list of online invasive alien species information systems, distributed at the GISIN meeting, as a checklist of relevant organizations and contacts in the region.

Nordic-Baltic Network on Invasive Species - NOBANIS

Gateway to information on invasive species in the Nordic and Baltic countries

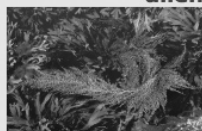
NOBANIS is intended to be a gateway to data on invasive species in Northern Europe - The Nordic and Baltic Region incl. Russia, Poland and Germany.

NOBANIS develops a distributed but integrated network of common databases for the region.

NOBANIS promotes the exchange of information on invasive alien species, as well as experiences with eradication or control of invasive alien species.

These pages are part of the ongoing project - As data are gathered they will be presented here.

NOBANIS puts focus on invasive aliens



SEAWEEDS

INVASIVE

The NOBANIS project

Species databases

Expert databases

Regional literature

Regulation of IAS

Other resources

Steering committee's access to project



Pages on website were updated: 09-08-2005

Webmaster: Inger Weidema

I3N Training at 2005 Society for Conservation Biology (SCB) Meeting

The Invasives Information Network (I3N) of the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN) has fostered the development of informatics tools to be freely shared with invasive species information managers. For more information on other NBII activities at the SCB, see the NBII International Connections column in this edition of *Access*.

Two hands-on training sessions were held at the SCB meeting to highlight the I3N database template, which encourages the standardized collection of invasive species data across nations in the Americas and

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elsewhere. The tools include XML output and automated fact sheet creation functionalities as well as extensive controlled vocabularies. Thirty-one trainees attended the two sessions, which were held in Portuguese, Spanish, and English. The workshops were led by I3N-Argentina (Dr. Sergio Zalba, Universidad Nacional del Sur), with support from I3N-Brasil (Silvia Ziller, Horus Institute for Environmental Conservation and Development), and I3N-USA (Annie Simpson, Andrea Grosse, and Yaba Batista, NBII).

Reception of the tool by trainees was very positive. The I3N tools will be available for distribution soon from the I3N Web page, at http://www.iabin-us.org/projects/i3n/i3n_project.html.


NISbase Advancements

NISbase is a distributed query system for invasive species data that was developed jointly between the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC) and the USGS Nonindigenous Aquatic Species (NAS) program with funding provided by the NBII and the USGS Invasive Species Program.



Recent advancements made to NISbase include a page for advanced search options. Now users cannot only query for a list of species by name or location, but they can also query based on habitat (freshwater; brackish; marine), population status (established, reported, failed); and invasion pathway (shipping, fisheries, ornamental, etc.). This makes it a valuable tool for researchers and managers to better understand the invasion pathways and status of species in their area. See <http://www.nisbase.org/nisbase/AdvSpSearch.jsp>.

Another new feature of NISbase is a query tool for references dealing with invasive species held by NAS and SERC. References can be queried through the traditional fields such as author, title, year, journal, and key words. The query returns the results from both databases and also provides a link to Google Scholar, a tool that searches scholarly references. See <http://www.nisbase.org/nisbase/searchRefs.jsp>.

Two new partner databases have also been added to NISbase in recent months: the Atlas of Exotic Species in the Mediterranean Sea and the Guide to the Exotic Species of San Francisco Bay. 

Addressing Concerns

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The NBII Metadata Program: Updates and Future Directions

The NBII Metadata Program seeks to make high-quality biological metadata records readily available to its community of users. By supporting a nationwide training program, offering creation assistance to nodes and partners, imposing strict quality control mechanisms, and maintaining a searchable Clearinghouse of Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) Standard records pertaining to geospatial and biological topics, this goal is being accomplished. Additionally, the NBII Metadata Program is successfully meeting the requirements of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) framework to provide a venue to acquire, create, store, and distribute standard biological and geospatial metadata records.


The NBII Clearinghouse provides a benchmark for measuring the success of the program. The Clearinghouse is a robust online tool through which users can search for standardized scientific metadata records on a wide variety of biological and geospatial topics. During the past four years, the Clearinghouse has experienced a steady increase in records; since 2001, over 8,000 records have been added. Increases in user searches over the past five years as well as the use of refined search terminology in those searches are indicative of both the high demand for metadata as a resource and a growing awareness of the importance of these records in scientific work.

Today there are 25 partner organizations contributing metadata records to the NBII Clearinghouse.

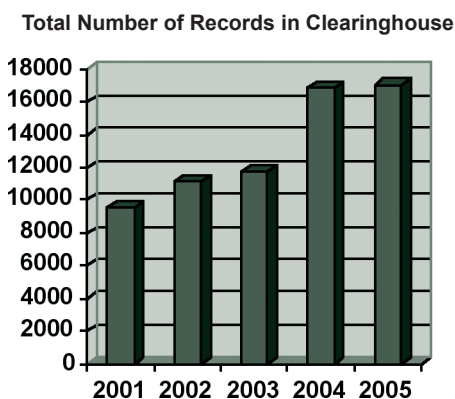


In June 2005, Train the Trainer participants in Denver, CO, learned the art of training others in the development of scientific metadata.

Partners participating in the Clearinghouse share their records through a process called harvesting in which original records are maintained



by the partner, then copied weekly into the Clearinghouse. Oak Ridge National Laboratory, an NBII partner, provides support for the interface, indexing, harvesting, and searching capabilities of metadata records across the NBII network. The NBII



Clearinghouse contributes significantly to the NBII's status as a World Data Center. NBII metadata partners, both national and international, contribute metadata records to the NBII Clearinghouse to make their records widely available to NBII and NSDI users for data sharing and exchange. To learn more, visit <http://www.nbii.gov/datainfo/metadata/clearinghouse/>.

The NBII regularly offers introductory workshops in the creation of metadata records. Each year, the NBII offers at least four training workshops organized by the Program Office. The workshops are free and offer participants information on how to create a metadata record, how to interpret the FGDC Standard and Biological Data Profile, what types of software are available, and how to upload quality controlled records to the Clearinghouse. In addition to introductory workshops, once a year the NBII hosts a Train-the-Trainer workshop to introduce metadata creators to the art of training others in metadata development, thus furthering awareness about the importance of metadata creation and distribution. This year, Train the Trainer was held in Denver, CO. For more information about training programs, go to

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<www.nbii.gov/datainfo/metadata/training>.

The NBII is working closely with the FGDC and other national programs such as GeoSpatial OneStop to coordinate efforts in standards development and metadata creation. The International Standards Organization (ISO) is expected to release a new standard for geospatial metadata in the near future, which, once approved and adopted by the FGDC, will become the standard supported by the NBII. The NBII will lead the effort to develop a Biological Profile to be included in the new ISO format, and will participate in efforts to develop crosswalks from the current FGDC-BDP Standard and offer updated record creation tools.

The NBII will improve the user experience by enhancing Clearinghouse functionality through browse trees and other search techniques. Additionally, the NBII will introduce new portal technology in which users will visit the NBII Metadata Community to perform metadata functions such as uploading records, searching for metadata, participating in forums, and signing up for available training workshops.

Ongoing collaborative efforts will continue with such groups as the Millennium Assessment, with whom the NBII is creating metadata records and developing tools to enhance their data retrieval process as part of World Data Center efforts. Additionally, the NBII will continue to work extensively with the Long Term Ecological Research Network in standards development, crosswalks, and metadata record sharing.

For more information about the NBII Metadata Program, visit <www.nbii.gov/datainfo/metadata> or contact Viv Hutchison <vhutchison@usgs.gov> to find out how you can get involved. 🌿

The screenshot shows the GAP Analysis Program website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Welcome, Guest', 'Log In', 'Text-Only Portal', and a search bar. Below this is a header with the GAP logo and the tagline 'KEEPING COMMON SPECIES COMMON'. The main navigation menu includes 'GAP Home', 'Maps, Data & Reports', 'Projects', 'Research & Applications', and 'Support & Tools'. The 'GAP Home' section features a sidebar with links to 'GAP Highlights', 'About GAP', 'Mission', 'Organization', 'Literature', 'FAQs', and 'Meetings'. The main content area is titled 'The GAP Analysis Program' with the subtitle 'Keeping Common Species Common'. It includes a photograph of a butterfly and text explaining the program's goal: to keep common species common by identifying those species and plant communities that are not adequately represented in existing conservation lands. To the right, there is a 'Featured Application of GAP' section for 'Marine Gap Analysis of Hawaii', which describes an integrated approach to understand Hawaii's ocean environment. Below this is a 'Special Feature' section with a link to 'View the GAP Movie' and a thumbnail for 'Keeping Common Species Common'. At the bottom, there is a 'GAP Status Map' showing the United States with states color-coded by the year of their GAP analysis. The legend indicates: 1993 (lightest), 1994, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 (anticipated), and 'No project in progress' (white). States with diagonal hatching are noted as having update projects underway. Insets show maps for New England, Mid-Atlantic, Hawaii, and Alaska.

GAP's new look at <gapanalysis.nbii.gov>.

Portal is simple: to serve as a data warehouse where users can search for and visualize GAP data. It is important to note that this product is not intended for advanced mapping or analytical processing of GAP data over the Internet. Rather, it is designed to allow users to visualize the data, and to serve the data to any other Internet Mapping Service through the Open GIS Consortium's Web Map Service 1.1 specification. The mapping component provides two new ways of integrating data: a deep link capability to the GAP Data using the Map Viewer, or an OGC WMS capability for use in other Map Viewers.

GAP's mission is to promote biodiversity conservation by

developing and sharing information on where species and natural communities occur and how they are being managed for their long-term survival – making it an important part of the NBII. "Gap Analysis" is a scientific method for identifying the degree to which native animal species and natural plant communities are represented in our present-day network of conservation lands. Those species and communities not adequately represented constitute "gaps" in conservation lands and efforts.

For more information on the GAP Portal, you may contact the NBII's Donna Roy by e-mail <droy@usgs.gov> or phone 703/648-4209. 🌿

International Connections

NBII International Program Participates at the Society for Conservation Biology (SCB) Annual Meeting in Brazil

The IABIN Invasives Information Network (I3N) and the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN), in which the NBII International Program plays central roles, were prominently featured in several activities at the Annual Society for Conservation Biology meeting held at the University of Brasilia, Brazil, in July.

The I3N tools for organizing and exchanging information on invasive species, created with NBII support, were the focus of two training workshops. The two sessions, conducted in Portuguese, Spanish, and English, generated strong interest at the meeting and were attended by 31 participants. I3N-Argentina (Universidad Nacional del Sur), I3N-Brasil (Horus Institute

for Environmental Conservation and Development), and the NBII jointly sponsored the workshops.

I3N also co-sponsored a symposium, "Biological Invasions: Lessons from the Southern Hemisphere," where Andrea Grosse of the NBII International Program and Program Manager for I3N, presented on the value of databases and international cooperation in information exchange. The NBII also sponsored a booth and posters highlighting their international activities, including the Gap Analysis Program, the

Integrated Taxonomic Information System, and work on invasive species.

As a result of the participation, USGS-NBII reached an agreement with the Alexander von Humboldt Institute to lead I3N efforts in Colombia and began a dialogue to establish a partnership that will bring

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Photo credit: Andrea Grosse/NBII; Silvia Ziller/Instituto Horus

I3N Leads Sergio Zalba (Argentina) and Silvia Ziller (Brazil) answer a question from Leide Takahashi of Brazil during the hands-on portion of the I3N training.

Andrea Grosse discusses the IABIN-NBII-FishBase poster and NBII international activities with Angel Sol-Sanchez of Mexico and Costa Rica.



Photo credit: Andrea Grosse/NBII

The thick bark of a tree typical of the savannah surrounding Brasilia protects it from fire damage.

International Connections (continued from page 9)

images of southern Brazilian species to the NBII Digital Image Library.

Information on IABIN and I3N can be found at <<http://www.iabin-us.org>>. Information on the NBII International Program can be found at <<http://international.nbii.gov>>.

United States–Australia Climate Action Partnership

Officials from the United States and Australia met July 25-26 in Canberra, Australia, to review progress and discuss future directions under the United States-Australia Climate Action Partnership (CAP). The U.S. delegation included senior representatives from the Departments of State, Energy, and Agriculture, the USGS-NBII, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The U.S. delegation met with a wide range of Australian scientists and officials.

Projects being implemented through the Partnership cover technology development, climate science, biological informatics,

adaptation, agriculture, energy, and emissions measurement and accounting.

The talks focused on progress and achievements to date, and canvassed options for future cooperative action. These recent discussions represent an important step in advancing the Partnership and reinforce the commitment of both Governments to practical action on climate change science and technology and capacity building on biological information sharing and infrastructure development in the Pacific.

Joint Action Between New Zealand and United States on Climate Change

The United States and New Zealand have committed to enhanced bilateral dialogue and practical cooperation under the U.S.–New Zealand Climate Change Partnership, which focuses on enhancing and accelerating collaboration and practical ways to address climate

change. Senior officials from New Zealand and the United States met in New Zealand in July to create more opportunities for the two countries to work together under the Partnership.

Three new projects announced under the Partnership will focus on the exchange of scientific data, information, and tools that can assist decision-making and enable the efficient management of ecosystems in the context of climate variability and change. The projects include collaboration in the biological informatics area and specifically focus on the Pacific Biodiversity Information Forum; integration of data systems and sharing of biodiversity expertise in the development of regional Ocean Biogeographic Information Systems; and joint work on databases and information on invasive species and their management.

For further information on the bilateral and other international initiatives, please contact Dr. Toral Patel-Weynand at 703/648-4217.

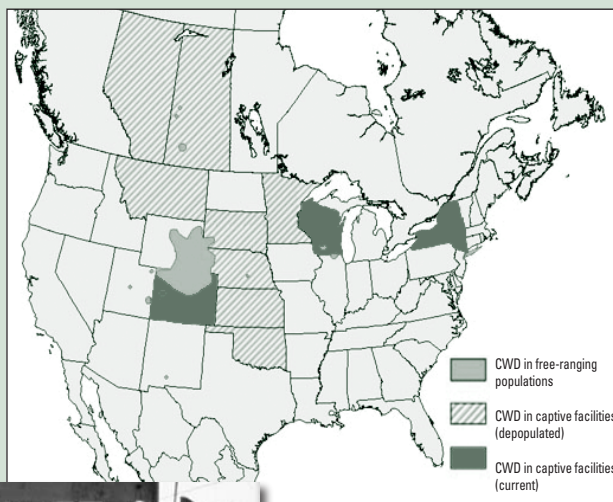
New Version of CWDDC Introduced

A new version of the NBII Wildlife Disease Information Node National Chronic Wasting Disease Data Clearinghouse (CWDDC) has been launched. For access to it, see <<http://wildlifedisease.nbii.gov/cwddc>>.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a fatal disease of the nervous system affecting elk, white-tailed deer, and mule deer in a limited number of areas in North America. Due to the potential wildlife health and economic impacts, diligent surveillance and accurate information are critical to managing CWD effectively.

Endorsed by federal, state, and Native American community representatives, the CWDDC allows easy access to CWD surveillance, research, and testing data. This NBII central data repository will offer many advantages, including Web-based resource sharing and spatial analysis tools. From their own locations, partners can use this data entry and data visualization application without the expense of creating individual, stand-alone systems.

The NBII CWDDC site is currently being developed and maintained by the USGS National Wildlife Health Center.



▲ CWD throughout North America as of April 2005. Map courtesy of USGS National Wildlife Health Center: <http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov/research/chronic_wasting/chronic_wasting_map.html>.

◀ Infected mule deer with CWD

Photo credit: Christina Sigurdson, Colorado State University. Photo taken at Colorado Division of Wildlife Research Facility.

It's a New Millennium for the NBII Digital Image Library

We were pleased to unveil the NBII Digital Image Library at the 2004 NBII All-Nodes Meeting (see *Access*, summer 2004). Now, in barely a year, we're delighted to announce that we recently logged our one-thousandth image into the library!

You can see our images to date at <<http://images.nbii.gov>>. As our offerings have grown, so too have our categories, which now range from biological subjects to special collections. Today, our holdings include images associated with plant and animal species, scenic landscapes, wildlife management, and biological study and fieldwork.

All images are dynamically linked to metadata – specific information about an image. The metadata record contains relevant and validated information about the image, such as scientific and common names, a description, and geographic location as well as photographer and contributing partner names. In addition, most images are in the public domain and available for download in three file sizes: thumbnail, medium, and high-resolution.

As the NBII Digital Image Library continues to expand, we invite you to participate as a customer, a partner, or both. Help us add our next thousand records in record time!

For more information about the Image Library, to contribute images, or to explore partnership opportunities, please contact:

Gene Morris
Digital Image Library Program Lead
Phone: 703/648-4351
E-mail: images@nbii.gov

Annette Olson, Ph.D.
Biodiversity Scientist
Phone: 703/648-4080
E-mail: alolson@usgs.gov

Find us on the Web at:
<<http://images.nbii.gov>>.



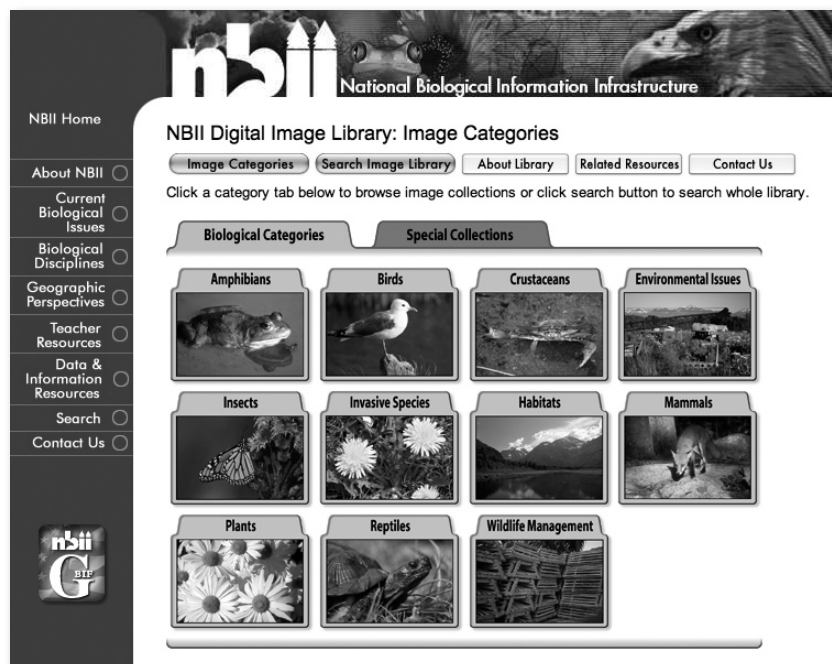
Our 1,000th image:

Title: *Century Plant (Agave americana)*

Common Names: *American agave, American century plant, centuryplant, Maguey americano*

Scientific Name: *Agave americana*

Taken at *Bosque Del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, New Mexico, United States*



Upcoming Events of NBII Interest

World Library and Information Congress: 71st IFLA General Conference and Council, Oslo, Norway.	August 14-18	Natural Areas Association and Center for Great Plains Studies Annual Symposium, Lincoln, NE.	September 21-24
Wastewater Technology 2005, San Francisco, CA.	August 28-31	4th European Networked Knowledge Organization Systems (NKOS) Workshop, Vienna, Austria.	September 22
CAUDI-EDUCAUSE Institute, Queensland, Australia.	August 28-September 1	The Wildlife Society 12th Annual Conference, Madison, WI.	September 25-29
Animal Agriculture and Processing: Managing Environmental Impacts, St. Louis, MO.	August 31-September 2	Society of Environmental Journalists (SEJ) 15th Annual Conference, Austin, TX.	September 28-October 2
West Coast Shorebirds, Millbrae, CA.	September 3-8	1st International Digital Curation Conference, Bath, England.	September 29-30
American Fisheries Society 135th Annual Meeting, Anchorage, AK.	September 11-15	Library & Information Technology Association (LITA) 2005 National Forum, San Jose, CA.	September 29-October 2
International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Meeting, Nashville, TN.	September 11-17	8th World Wilderness Conference, Anchorage, AK.	September 30-October 6
Coastal Texas 2020 Technical Erosion Conference, Houston, TX.	September 14-16	Springs and Things: Importance of Groundwater, Riparian Areas and Wetlands, San Marcos, TX.	October 5-8
WebSearch University, Arlington, VA.	September 19-20	Internet Librarian International, London, England.	October 10-11
Fifth European Conference on Ecological Modeling, Pushchino, Russia.	September 19-23		



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